

## **Environmental Assistance To Livestock Operators**

### **RFA EPA-OW-OWM-07-01**

#### **Questions and Answers (all questions due to EPA by June 29, 2007)**

*Updated as of 6/18/07*

1. Q: Is the funding opportunity open to private organizations?

A: As indicated in the solicitation, private nonprofit entities may apply. In addition, the grantee may partner with for-profit organizations providing that they adhere to procurement policies referenced in the grant solicitation. Please refer to Sections II and III of the solicitation for more information on eligibility and funding restrictions.

2. Q: Is it EPA's intention that the solicitation for Environmental Assistance For Livestock Operators result in one award for \$8 million?

A: Yes, EPA anticipates awarding one grant under this announcement for a total of approximately \$7.9 million over four years. (See the solicitation, Section II.)

3. Q: Does EPA want one applicant to address all types of animal operations all over the country?

A: Yes. In the solicitation, EPA requests that applicants demonstrate their ability to identify an approach for reaching all major animal sectors of the livestock industry (e.g., poultry, dairy, cattle, and swine) that covers a broad range of geographic areas throughout the United States. (See the solicitation, Section I.C.)

4. Q: Does the program fund the implementation of the developed nutrient management plan (NMP) in addition to the technical assistance?

A: No, the NMP portion of the grant is for developing or reviewing NMPs, not for implementation of the NMP. (See Section I.C. of the solicitation for additional information on the NMP portion of the grant.)

5. Q: Since the grant provides points for delivering technical assistance to multiple types of livestock (dairy, cattle, swine, poultry) across the nation, we are wondering if we are wasting our time. Instead our focus would be working with dairy, cattle & poultry operations in a particular airshed.

A: Depending on who receives the award, the grantee may need to find partners to work with to service different parts of the country. In that case, the grantee may need to run a competitive process to find someone to do this work once EPA has awarded the funds. Once the grant has been awarded, you have the option of contacting the grantee and asking how they plan to staff the project and whether they anticipate running their own competition. Please refer to Section II of the solicitation for more information on applicable procurement and subaward or subgrant procedures.

6. Q: Does Wisconsin Farm\*A\*Syst have the contract to perform the work requested in this RFP in FY 2005 and FY 2006?

A: No.

7. Q: Can you tell me who any other incumbent providers are of the farm environmental assessments?

A: There are no incumbent grantees for the funds being competed under the current solicitation.

8. Q: Are there any other organizations you know of that are seeking partners for the work requested in the solicitation?

A: EPA does not and cannot provide information regarding other parties interested in the grant.

9. Q: It is a large amount of funding with such a short time frame to complete a comprehensive grant application. Is it true that the funding for this grant may not be appropriated?

A: No, EPA is following the standard procedures for open competition for grants funding, and we are aware of the time constraints facing applicants.

10. Q: The CFDA # 66.202 – “Congressionally Mandated Projects”, can you offer an interpretation?

A: EPA originally received the grant funding through a Congressional earmark directing EPA to award the funds to a specific organization. This organization has since ceased to exist, and EPA as a consequence is awarding the funds through an open competition.

11. Q: My firm is an environmental and engineering consulting firm wholly-owned by a public utility which has engaged in work with CAFOs in the past in different capacities. Would a firm such as ours be eligible for this grant opportunity?

A: Generally, if your organization is public nonprofit institution/organization or a private nonprofit institution/organization, you would be eligible to apply. In addition, the grantee may partner with for-profit organizations providing that they adhere to procurement policies referenced in the grant solicitation. Please refer to Sections II and III for more information on eligibility and funding restrictions.

12. Q: What detailed budget information should we include in the 20 page statement of work (The "Project Narrative Attachment Form" in Grants.Gov) and what budget information should we include as part of the bulleted budget narrative ("Budget Narrative Attachment Form in Grants.Gov)?

A: The detailed budget description in the Statement of Work should include the estimate of the cost range per assessment and per NMP review/development showing the diversity of sectors and geographic locations of the operations expected to participate. This budget information would count against the 20 page limit.

The budget narrative information (explaining the amounts in the budget categories per the Form SF424A) should be included in the Budget Narrative Attachment Form in Grants.Gov and would not be counted against the 20 page limit.

13. Q: Will any capital expenditures for on-the-ground implementation of projects or practices for mitigation of environmental impacts be allowed?

A: No, capital expenditures are not allowed for implementation or mitigation expenses.

14. Q: Will these funds be available for developing new nutrient management plans for operations that do not currently have a plan or have an outdated plan that must be updated?

A: Yes, the funds may be used for both developing new plans and reviewing or revising existing plans.

15. Q: Since only one entity must be the holder of this grant, will it be possible for this entity to form a coalition with other states or entities to conduct projects jointly?

A: As Section II of the solicitation notes, the grantee may use funding to acquire services or fund partnerships, provided the recipient follows applicable procurement and subaward or subgrant procedures. Please refer to the Answer for Question 5 for additional information on this topic.

16. Q: Should states with relatively small numbers of livestock utilize personnel resources for conducting what appears to be a complicated and lengthy application process, i.e., do they have a chance for being successful?

A: In the solicitation, EPA notes that the grantee must be able to service all major animal sectors of the livestock industry across a broad range of geographic areas throughout the United States. Providing this range of service to the grant may necessitate teaming of some sort either for the application itself or once the award is made. Please refer also to Question 5 for additional discussion of this topic.

17. Q: I understand that livestock operations across the country may be able to receive assistance from the successful grantee that may be located in a distant state. If so, what is the mechanism for this process and how will states be made aware of this process?

A: The exact mechanism for getting the technical assistance out to livestock operators will depend on the process outlined by the successful applicant. Once the award is made, however, EPA and the applicant will ensure that operators are aware of how to avail themselves of the assistance available under the grant.

18. Q: The announcement for this grant was published on May 25, 2007, with a grant application submission deadline of July 9, 2007. This seems to be a very short time period for an entity to research this issue, and compile and present required information for consideration. Is there a reason for this short time frame?

A: We do not believe the 45 day open period is a short time period and it is consistent with the standards set forth in the Agency's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy. In addition, the time period was influenced by the fact that the funding for the grant expires at the end of the Agency's fiscal year on September 30, 2007 and the Agency will need to award the grant before that date. However, in recognition of concerns expressed about the deadline, the Agency is extending the date for receipt of applications to July 13, 2007.

19. Q: Would a pasture-based operation with a herd of about 350 animals be able to receive the grant?

A: This type of operation would be able to receive the technical assistance under the grant once it has been awarded.

20. Q: Does this fund source apply only to afo/cafo's?

A: All types of livestock operations of all sizes can receive technical assistance under the grant.

21. Q: There is a growing need to include energy and nutrient recovery processes in manure environmental management. Is EPA receptive to a proposal that is comprehensive in its efforts to assist livestock operators?

A: As indicated in section C.3. of the solicitation, applicants may propose to develop or use their own unique assessment tools that include features in addition to the ones outlined by EPA in the RFA, as long as the assessment tool provides a comprehensive environmental assessment for participating livestock operators.

22. Q: Is there a way that this grant opportunity could support a "complete package" approach starting with livestock manure assessment, moving on to nutrient management plans, developing manure application strategies that reduce bacteria contributions to surface water, implementing tillage changes and placing a water monitoring network in the areas that are targeted?

A: EPA is looking for applications that describe how the grantee will provide livestock operators with comprehensive environmental assessments and nutrient

management plans, which could include the factors described above. However, expenditures under the grant cannot include capital costs for implementing the assessments or nutrient management plans.

23. Q: Are you hoping for a project of very large scale or a project of smaller scale that we can learn from and generalize the findings to greater areas?

A: The technical assistance available through the grant is intended to be available to livestock operators of all sizes. The grant also has a reporting provision that will allow EPA to view aggregated information on participation that will help characterize challenges faced in particular geographic regions and animal sectors.